



National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians  
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# Press Release

## **NAEMT FIRST RESPONDER TERRORISM PREPAREDNESS ACT OF 2002 (S 2664 IS):**

**Clinton, MS, Thursday, June 26, 2002 - 08:30:** The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians has announced its support of the FIRST RESPONDER TERRORISM PREPAREDNESS ACT OF 2002.

The First Responder Terrorism Preparedness Act of 2002 (S 2664 IS) is a bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to establish a program to provide assistance to enhance the ability of first responders to respond to incidents of terrorism, including incidents involving weapons of mass destruction, and for other purposes.

Senators Jim Jeffords, I - VT, and Bob Smith, R - NH, the Chairman and ranking members of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW), have introduced this legislation to enhance the ability of first responders: Emergency Medical Service, fire, and police personnel, to respond to acts of terrorism and incidents involving weapons of mass destruction.

NAEMT President Nathan R. Williams stated: "We are extremely happy that this legislative act has been introduced. The net result upon successful passage will mean more opportunities for our nation's EMS personnel to become better prepared to protect themselves and their communities in times of terrorist incident response."

The First Responder Terrorism Preparedness Act is a culmination of meetings with first responders, and mirrors the President's proposal. The legislation, under *Section 5 - PREPAREDNESS ASSISTANCE FOR FIRST RESPONDERS*, provides the following:

- Each state would receive a base amount of \$15 million and additional amounts would be distributed according to criteria such as population and critical infrastructure (including nuclear power plants and proximity to international borders);
- Grants would flow through the states to the local governments. At least 75 percent of the money received by a state would flow through to local governments;

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- Eligible activities would include planning, training, equipment, communications, and constructing or upgrading emergency operation centers and training facilities;
- A new Office of National Preparedness (ONP) would be established at the Federal Emergency Management Agency. ONP would be responsible for leading a coordinated and integrated effort to improve terrorism preparedness and response capability at all levels of government. Duties of the office will include encouraging mutual aid agreements between states, setting guidelines and standards for first responders, and managing the first responder grant program;
- Additional support would be extended to the 28 FEMA-designated Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces.

NAEMT Past President and Terrorism Task Force chairman Paul M. Maniscalco stated, "We are greatly appreciative of Senators Jeffords and Smith for their efforts on behalf of our nation's EMS responders. The implementation of the measures identified in this bill will lend greatly needed assistance to the state and local responders who defend this country. On September 11, 2001, while the nation was attacked, it was the state and local communities that responded. The successful passage of this bill is critical to enhancement of the local EMS terrorism response capacity. By providing this assistance to our state and local EMS organizations, the NAEMT believes that we will finally commence the complex and expensive journey towards greater readiness. A better prepared hometown is a better defended homeland."

NAEMT encourages all EMT's and Paramedics to contact their United States Senators and voice their support of the First Responder Terrorism Preparedness Act of 2002.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) is the sole national professional organization representing the interests of the more than 870,000 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) and Paramedics throughout the United States.

For additional information please contact NAEMT Headquarters at 1-800-34-NAEMT.

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